San Francisco Chronicle

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Housing bill foe's ads use racial imagery

Mailer, TV spots liken Wiener's transit proposal to urban renewal

By Rachel Swan

A provocative mailer by a deep-pocketed Los Angeles activist equates a state housing bill with "Negro removal," a comparison that prompted state Sen. Scott Wiener and San Francisco Mayor London Breed to fire back Thursday.

The ad, paid for by Michael Weinstein, appeared on cable television, snowballed on social media and popped up in mailboxes throughout the city this week. It features a picture of famous black author James Baldwin with a quote about San Francisco's urban renewal policies, which displaced thousands of African Americans from the Fillmore.

"San Francisco is engaging ... in something called urban renewal, which means moving the Negroes out. It means Negro removal," says the quote, attributed to Baldwin in 1963.

It's juxtaposed with a picture of Wiener, whose bill, SB50, seeks to put more housing near transit stations and job centers.

"SB50 is a handout to greedy developers by Senator Scott (Wiener) that would make our housing affordability crisis even worse," the ad says.

Wiener, D-San Francisco, has long been embroiled in a feud with Weinstein. The senator traces that beef to 2014, when he stopped the foundation from opening a chain pharmacy in the Castro neighborhood without a proper permit. The two have also sparred over HIV-prevention treatment PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis), which allows people to have unprotected sex without the risk of getting HIV. Wiener champions PrEP; Weinstein, whose AIDS Healthcare Foundation manages clinics and pharmacies that serve HIV patients, has called it a "party drug."

Now the two are clashing over housing.

AIDS Healthcare Foundation "presents itself as a community-based nonprofit with 'AIDS' and 'Foundation' in its name, but in reality, it is a chain pharmacy and insurance company, labeled 'nonprofit' but with a budget in excess of $1 billion," Wiener wrote

Ads continues on A6

THE MUELLER REPORT

No coordination, but no resolution

Obstruction: Much evidence, but not enough for charges

Russia: Meddling in '16 election hurt Clinton campaign

Takeaway: Juicy details on Trump put Dems on spot

Photo illustration by Tam Duong / The Chronicle

Counsel rejects view that president is above the law, leaves door open to Congress charging president later

By Michael S. Schmidt and Charlie Savage

WASHINGTON — For nearly two years, President Trump's lawyers and defenders have argued that it was impossible for him to illegally obstruct the Russia investigation, no matter his intentions, because he has full authority over federal law enforcement as head of the executive branch.

But in his highly anticipated report, Special Counsel Robert Mueller rejected that sweeping view of executive power. Mueller's team systematically dissected and repudiated such arguments, concluding over more than a dozen of the report's 448 pages that obstruction laws did indeed limit how Trump could use his presidential powers.

"The conclusion that Congress may apply the obstruction laws to the president's corrupt exercise of the powers of office accords with our constitutional system of checks and balances and the principle that no person is above the law," they wrote.

Report continues on A9

More inside

Reaction: Members of California's congressional delegation issue predictably partisan statements. **A8**

Editorial: The attorney general has misled the nation, and the president's claim of "total exoneration" has been debunked. **A10**

By John Wildermuth and Tal Kopan

Special Counsel Robert Mueller's long-awaited report into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and allegations that President Trump tried to block the investigation into it was made public Thursday. It didn't settle much, but there is one big takeaway: What happens next is up to Democrats.

ANALYSIS

Trump and his supporters were quick to seize on Mueller's determination that no one from his campaign conspired with the Russians and the special counsel's refusal to say the president obstructed justice.

"No Collusion. No Obstruction. For the haters and the radical left Democrats — GAME OVER," Trump tweeted.

Democrats had a very different take on the 400-plus-page report, arguing there were targets for congressional investigation even if Trump couldn't be charged with a

Analysis continues on A8

Despite outrage, findings won't help candidates during 2020 race

Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report on Russia's "sweeping and systematic" interference in the 2016 election is chock-full of fodder for House Democrats to investigate over the next year and a half.

JOE GAROFOLI
It's All Political

But it is unlikely to change the dynamics of the 2020 election.

"What came out today won't be determinative. It just reinforces everyone's views," G. Terry Madonna, a pollster and director of the Center for Politics and Public Affairs at Franklin & Marshall College in swing state Pennsylvania, said Thursday. "If you're a Republican, you'll support the president. If you're a Democrat, you won't."

And what about those 10 percent or so of voters in the

Garofoli continues on A9

Golden State Killer case made genealogy pro a top consultant

By Matthias Gafni

Barbara Rae-Venter was browsing her emails last month, wading through numerous media requests for interviews, when she noticed a message from Time magazine.

In the year since she gained international acclaim for her work in cracking the infamous Golden State Killer case, the 70-year-old Monterey County resident has become a leading crime-fighter. She's used her pioneering method of merging DNA science with painstaking genealogy research to help solve the coldest of killings across the country.

So she figured the March 8 email was yet another request from a reporter to talk about the "GSK" case and its fallout. Instead, the genetic genealogist had been named one of Time's 100 most influential people of 2019.

"I almost didn't open it," Rae-Venter said with a laugh, "but when I did, I was just absolutely stunned."

Nothing much surprises Rae-Venter these days. Wednesday will mark the one-year anniversary of Golden State Killer suspect Joseph DeAngelo's arrest, which kicked off a whirlwind year for Rae-Ven-

Rae-Venter continues on A7

Business

IPOs start with a bang: Pinterest stock jumps 28% on first day. Zoom really takes off. **D1**

Datebook

Actress portrays mother thrust into superhero role as she tries to mend family. **E1**

Weather
Sun and clouds. Highs: 59-84. Lows: 51-55. **D4**

WARRIORS 132, CLIPPERS 105

Golden State leads series 2-1

Dominant Kevin Durant scores 38 points as Warriors bounce back from epic collapse in Game 2 to rout L.A. **B1**